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FLOOR DEBATE

April 19, 2001      LB 180

Business and Labor Committee did a study, LR 475. The results of that study determined that only 12 of the 49 detasseling firms actually were subject to either the 20-consecutive-week provision or the...excuse me, the \$20,000 in one calendar year quarter; therefore, approximately 25 percent of the detassellers in Nebraska are subject to the change that occurred way back in 1995. LB 180 is the clean-up bill that allows us to go back to able to hire 12- and 13-year-olds, not only those who...certainly the ones under \$20,000 a quarter can do that now, but all of the detasseling companies. During the committee hearing, there was testimony that one company was aware of this problem and had knowingly violated the law. Maybe Senator Chambers will comment on that as well. But according to the transcript, Senator Chambers said, "Did your company know that at the time it was hiring these children who are younger than 16, that they were violating the law by doing so?" The response from the individual was, "Yes, sir". So the committee amendments, Senator Connealy will explain, but that's kind of where we're at. This was supposedly an innocuous clean-up department bill that had a quite eventful hearing, and the result of that is what you will see in the committee amendments. And then the additional commend...amendments that have been filed by Senator Kremer and then a final one by Senator Connealy. It would be my hope that we go through these amendments and adopt them all, one at a time. I did have an amendment to the bill that has been adopted in the committee amendments of which Senator Connealy, chairman of Business and Labor, will go into, limiting the children that work in Nebraska to come from Nebraska or adjoining states. And I...there...I wanted to head off any possible mischief that can be...that you can imagine of transporting children across several states from different regions of our country to work in Nebraska in the fields. I wanted to head that off, not saying that that's happened. Don't know of any plans that it will happen, not necessarily, but wanted to make sure that indeed in Nebraska it doesn't happen. Those are in the committee amendments. And with that I will end my opening on the bill.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Hilgert. Senator Connealy, you're recognized on the committee amendments to LB 180. (AM0806, Legislative Journal page 958.)